



The Nuggets

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Baha'i Stories

Grief

'Abdu'l-Bahá learned well the meaning of Bahá'u'lláh's words: 'Beware, lest thou allow anything whatsoever to grieve thee.' Acquainted with sorrow, He was known to shed tears when He spoke of the hardships endured by Bahá'u'lláh, His family and His followers who went into exile with Him. Sometimes He appeared sad because not more people were responsive to His call to Bahá'u'lláh, but He truly lived what He spoke when He said, referring to the spiritual Kingdom, 'A man living with his thoughts in this Kingdom knows perpetual joy. The ills all flesh is heir to do not pass him by, but they only touch the surface of his life, the depths are calm and serene.' ~Honnold, Annamarie, Vignettes from the Life of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

Events and News

Bahá'í World News Service

Principle of Equality a Necessary Condition for Peace



NEW YORK — *In its contribution to discussions at the 69th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), the Bahá'í International Community's (BIC) delegation highlighted how local consultative spaces are enabling communities to foster a culture of peace rooted in the principle of the equality of women and men.*

This year's Commission coincided with the 30th anniversary of the landmark Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action conference, providing a significant opportunity to assess progress and discuss paths forward.

Throughout the CSW sessions, BIC representatives emphasized that achieving the equality of women and men requires transformation at multiple levels, from individual consciousness and family dynamics to community practices and institutional arrangements.

The BIC's statement to the Commission, titled "In full partnership: Women's advancement as a prerequisite for peaceful societies," highlighted how true equality requires a transformation that goes beyond policy reforms to address the spiritual and cultural roots of inequality.

"Unless we think about the mindsets and the culture within which we are all operating, then any change that we make is vulnerable to political winds," noted Liliane Nkunzimana, a BIC Representative, during a roundtable discussion hosted by the BIC.

This perspective reflects the Bahá'í understanding that spiritual transformation must accompany social change. As Ms. Nkunzimana explained: "Equality is not only a goal, but a necessary condition for peace and prosperity."

She elaborated that achieving enduring peace requires the full participation of women in all dimensions of society—from creating peaceful homes and neighborhoods to arranging economic institutions, being involved in educational processes, and negotiating peace.

This vision reflects a future, she added, “where every individual, irrespective of their sex, is able to flourish as a co-creator of society.”

Experiences from Bahá’í moral and spiritual educational programs in diverse settings provided examples of how this vision of equality and full participation is being translated into practice. Andrea Salguero, member of Canada’s Bahá’í Office of Public Affairs, stated: “These educational programs bring both women and men together with the aim of building a sense of community where people live.” Ms. Salguero added: “In these spaces, where spiritual principles like the oneness of humanity and equality are studied, explored, and put into practice through service to society, we are seeing new patterns of relationships between men and women gradually emerge.”

These educational programs foster collective learning processes where cultural practices can be examined in light of spiritual principles. When communities engage in open and honest consultation about the equality of women and men, they often begin to question those longstanding customs acting as barriers to equality that may have gone unexamined for generations. It is through these conversations that communities come to recognize patterns that may not align with the principle of equality and begin to envision new possibilities.

At a BIC roundtable discussion with 70 participants, Bani Dugal, the Principal Representative of the BIC to the United Nations, highlighted how these consultative processes are catalyzing profound intergenerational shifts. When spiritual principles—including justice, oneness, and the equality of women and men—are explored at depth by people in a neighborhood or village, practices such as early marriage are reexamined in a new light.

Ms. Dugal stated: “As participants in communities around the world think and consult together, girls are being sent on to higher education, and practices such as early marriage are now being questioned by even the grandmothers, who themselves were married at very early ages.”

This represents not just a change in behavior, but a deeper transformation in how the potential of women and girls is understood within families.

While acknowledging the obstacles to women’s advancement globally, the BIC’s engagement at CSW reflected a perspective grounded in witnessing tangible development across diverse settings where Bahá’í community-building initiatives are taking root.

In closing the roundtable, Ms. Dugal, reflecting on the vision of the Bahá’í teachings of a better world, stated: “I am filled with a lot of hope and joy.

“I know there is a lot of conflict around the world, a lot of pain and suffering. However, I do see that we are connecting. And there is an awareness that was not there 30 years ago at the Beijing conference.”

In collaboration with the BIC and co-sponsored by the Government of Canada, the Bahá’í Office of Public Affairs of Canada held a parallel event exploring three decades of progress toward gender equality in Canada.

News from the Twin Community of Jaipur

Here is a sample of activities in pictures of many junior youth groups, Ruhi study groups, children’s classes, home visits and devotional and prayer meetings in different parts of Jaipur and Rajasthan.

The Ridvan festival was celebrated in Jaipur Baha'i house and different parts of Rajasthan.



Food for the Mind, Heart and Soul



A Waiter Learns Cree Language to Serve Better



Allegedly, there is a saying among the Cree Nation that goes “listen or your tongue will keep you deaf.” For Adam Rieger, a waiter at a cafe in Saskatchewan, it was his listening that opened up a world of human connection when he decided he should learn the language of his customers.

Smitty's Restaurant in Prince Albert, Sask. sees its fair share of tribal members, and the personable Rieger found it difficult to connect with them.

According to an interview with CBC News, Rieger explained that when he lived in Edmonton, he made the effort to serve diners in French, something the French-speaking Canadians warmly appreciated.

Despite the obvious challenges in learning a language beyond Latin, Rieger decided to listen so as not to be deaf to the hearts and culture of his customers. He began learning Cree to take orders and welcome guests, and helped break the ice by asking tribal customers to help him with certain words.

"He has positive energy, and then when he came back to us, that's when he told me that he's been trying to learn Cree," Natasha Wolfe, a Cree Nation member told CBC's Louise BigEagle.

Wolfe shared a video of him doing his job in Cree on social media to alert Tribal members of his compassion and interest in their language.

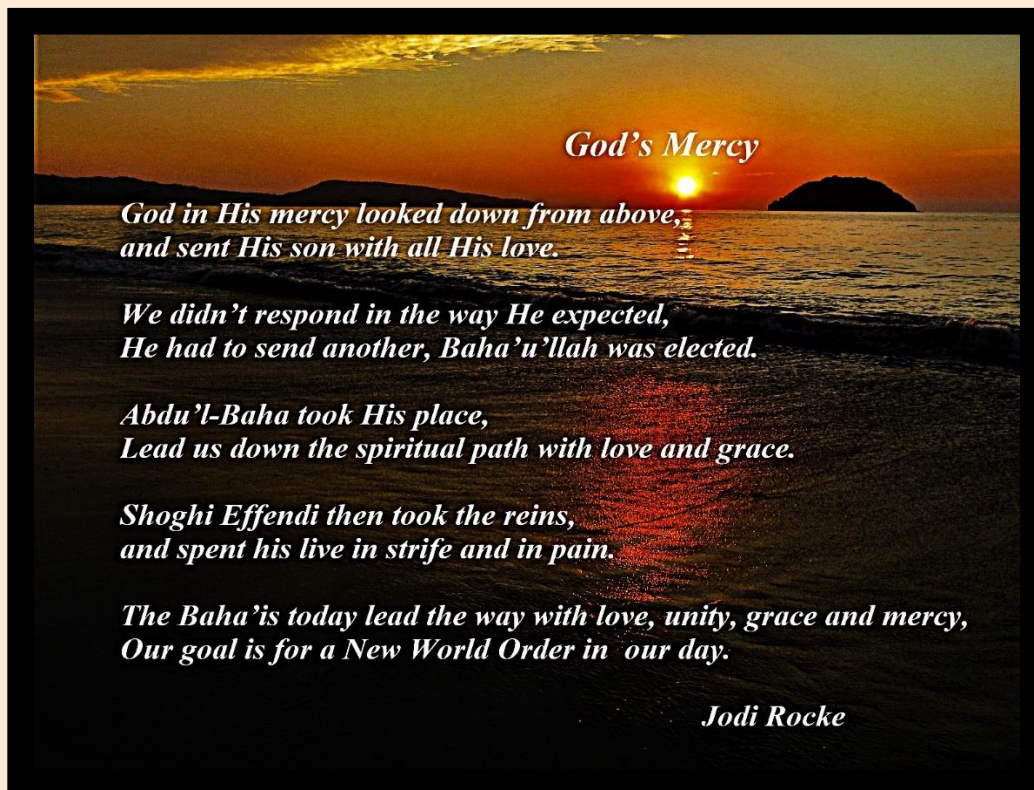
GNN reported earlier this year on a famous polyglot Youtuber visiting Cree Nation lands and surprising the people there by speaking Cree with semi-fluency. According to the Youtuber, going by the handle Xiaomany, Cree is difficult even among native languages, and for this reason there is a real concern it will die out in the coming generations.

Rieger is exactly the kind of messenger that keeps languages alive—their use in day-to-day activities.

He said his Cree is still basic, but he will keep trying to learn. He said he finds some parts of Cree challenging, like learning the written language and the alphabet. Along with speaking to the customers, Rieger, watches YouTube lessons by Cree member Simon Bird, who the waiter says is able to communicate the phonetics of the language perfectly.

"Once I started doing this and I started seeing people's reactions, it completely changed my perspective... immediately people would light up and they would start talking and be excited," Rieger said. "I could see that it's almost like the purpose of my job now became to reach people and to express love for them."

By Jodi Rocke:



Social Action

River Cleanup in Brazil Promotes Environmental Stewardship



SÃO SEBASTIÃO, Brazil — When a group of youth in São Sebastião, Brazil, in August were exploring how they could clean up a local river littered with trash, they had yet bigger questions in mind.

“If we clean the river, how can we prevent the trash from returning?” asked one of the young people from the Vila do Boa neighborhood.

To answer this question, the youth turned to insights they have been gaining through their participation in Bahá'í educational programs that develop their capacity to analyze social reality, identify the needs of their communities, and serve their society.

“We need to raise awareness of the protection of the environment alongside the cleanup,” said one of the youth from the group.

Different groups of youth from Vila do Boa participating in Bahá'í educational programs that develop their capacity to analyze social reality, identify the needs of their communities, and undertake activities for social action.

As conversations among the youth unfolded, they arrived at the conclusion that a newsletter could be an effective way to raise consciousness about the environment and share more broadly insights from local efforts to contribute to the wellbeing of their neighborhood.

Titled Vila do Boa—Só Notícia Boa (meaning Good Village—Good News Only), the name of the newsletter is a play on the term “boa”, which translates to “good”.

“There is only bad news in the newspapers, violence and sad things, so the idea came to share positive and good news, providing hope to neighbors and inviting them to participate,” said Marlene, the facilitator of the group, in an interview with the News Service.

Still more challenging questions followed as plans for the cleanup began to take shape. “How will we collect so much trash? And, how will we carry everything, like discarded TV sets and furniture, to the main road for removal?” asked the youth early on.

It did not take long, however, before the youth received an answer to their questions. A municipal official, after hearing about the project from one of the mothers of the youth at an event about water access, offered to meet with the young people to learn more about their initiative.

The official, inspired by his meeting with the youth, immediately arranged for trucks and workers to assist, and provided the youth with several sign boards that were painted and posted near the river, encouraging people to keep the area free of litter.

In the meantime, the first newsletter was made and delivered to over 120 families in the area. Nicole, one of the youth in the neighborhood, summed up the experience of the conversations with the families, stating: “If we plant good seeds, good things will grow from them.”

On the day of the cleanup, the commitment of the youth to support the initiative inspired the municipal workers to expand their efforts beyond the river to other parts of the neighborhood, resulting in the removal of 12 tons of trash.

“It was hard to work in the heat while wearing a mask, but the project created stronger friendships in our neighborhood,” said Esdras, a youth from Vila do Boa.

Gabriel, another young person, described how the Bahá'í educational programs that gave rise to this project have inspired many youth to be of service to their neighborhood over the years. “More and more youth are coming to learn about how they can participate and finding a greater sense of purpose by helping their community. This is how we’re building our lives, through friendship, service, and unity.”

Liese von Czékus Cavalcanti, member of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Brazil, elaborates further, describing how these efforts have opened the possibility for closer collaboration between area residents and the municipality to address the different needs of the community and have fostered a collective will for action among neighbors.

“Social transformation requires building unity among individuals, communities, and institutions. The power to effect lasting change is not in opposition and war. It is in unity. This is the power of transformation.”

From the Pages of History

Advent of the second Naw-Ruz

The second Naw-Ruz after the declaration of the Bab’s Mission, which fell on the twenty-first day of the month of Rabi’u’l-Avval, in the year 1262 A.H., found the Bab still in Shiraz enjoying, under circumstances of comparative tranquillity and ease, the blessings of undisturbed association with His family and kindred. Quietly and unceremoniously, He celebrated the festival of Naw-Ruz in His own home, and, in accordance with His invariable custom, bountifully conferred upon both His mother and His wife the marks of His affection and favour. By the wisdom of His counsels and the tenderness of His love, He cheered their hearts and dispelled their apprehensions. He bequeathed to them all His possessions and transferred to their names the title to His property. In a document which He Himself wrote and signed, He directed that His house and its furniture, as well as the rest of His estate, should be regarded as the exclusive property of His mother and His wife; and that upon the death of the former, her share of the property should revert to His wife.

The mother of the Bab failed at first to realise the significance of the Mission proclaimed by her Son. She remained for a time unaware of the magnitude of the forces latent in His Revelation. As she approached the end of her life, however, she was able to perceive the inestimable quality of that Treasure which she had conceived and given to the world. It was Baha’u’llah who eventually enabled her to discover the value of that hidden Treasure which had lain for so many years concealed from her eyes. She was living in Iraq, where she hoped to spend the remaining days of her life, when Baha’u’llah instructed two of His devoted followers, Haji Siyyid Javad-i-Karbila’i and the wife of Haji Abdu’l-Majid-i-Shirazi, both of whom were already intimately acquainted with her, to instruct her in the principles of the Faith. She acknowledged the truth of the Cause and remained, until the closing years of the thirteenth century A.H., when she departed this life, fully aware of the bountiful gifts which the Almighty had chosen to confer upon her.

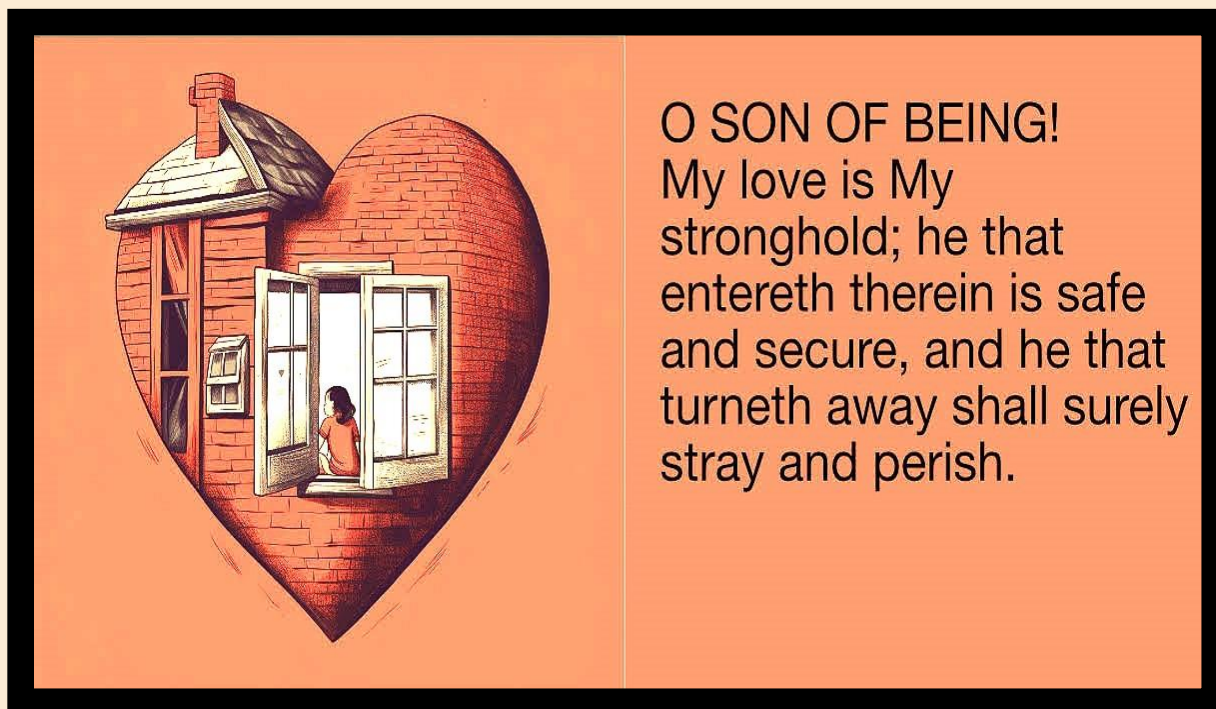
The wife of the Bab, unlike His mother, perceived at the earliest dawn of His Revelation the glory and uniqueness of His Mission and felt from the very beginning the intensity of its force. No one except Tahirih, among the women of her generation, surpassed her in the spontaneous character of her devotion nor excelled the fervor of her faith. To her the Bab confided the secret of His future sufferings, and unfolded to her eyes the significance of the events that were to transpire in His Day. He bade her not to divulge this secret to His mother and counselled her to be patient and resigned to the will of God. He entrusted her with a special prayer, revealed and written by Himself, the reading of which, He assured her, would remove her difficulties and lighten the burden of her woes. “In the hour of your perplexity,” He directed her, “recite this prayer ere you go to sleep. I Myself will appear to you and will banish your anxiety.” Faithful to His advice, every time she turned to Him in prayer, the light of His unflinching guidance illumined her path and resolved her problems.

After the Bab had settled the affairs of His household and provided for the future maintenance of both His mother and His wife, He transferred His residence from His own home to that of Haji Mirza Siyyid Ali. There He awaited the approaching hour of His sufferings. He knew that the afflictions which were in store for Him could no longer be delayed, that He was soon to be

caught in a whirlwind of adversity which would carry Him swiftly to the field of martyrdom, the crowning object of His life. He bade those of His disciples who had settled in Shiraz, among whom were Mulla Abdu'l-Karim and Shaykh Hasan-i-Zunuzi, to proceed to Isfahan and there await His further instructions. Siyyid Husayn-i-Yazdi, one of the Letters of the Living, who had recently arrived at Shiraz, was likewise instructed to proceed to Isfahan and to join the company of his fellow-disciples in that city.
~ The Dawn Breakers & Nabil's Narrative

Sharing

Douglas Wilson's sharing:



History, News and Nuggets from Other Religions and Communities



Indigenous Language Showcased on New West Coast Bus Stop Signs



West Coast, BC

BC Transit has incorporated Nuu-chah-nulth language on all the new bus stop signs within the refreshed West Coast Transit System, a historical first for the province's official transit service provider.

Yuulu?il?ath (Ucluelet First Nation) language keepers Marge Touchie (?a?asmacyak) and Jeneva Touchie (Čak^waasiqhwilim) worked on the translations for stops within Yuulu?il?ath traditional territory.

"It's an honour to share language within our community, it connects us and shows that representation matters," said Jeneva in a written statement.

Prior to the bus stop signage, Jeneva and Marge also supported the translation of street names within the municipality of Ucluelet and provided the Ucluelet Co-op with words and phrases for displays.

"Bit by bit we are incorporating more language within our community, which feels more like home. I see hope for our language as it is being widely accepted by those that live here," wrote Jeneva.

"I am hopeful for not only our language, but all languages across B.C., which is home to many languages. It is an honour to be able to share and encourage people to learn or ask questions about the territories they live in," she continued.

The West Coast Transit System starts and ends in the Yuulu?il?ath community of hitaču with stops in Ucluelet, the Pacific Rim National Park Reserve, the Tla-o-qui-aht communities of Esowista and Tyhistanis and Tofino or načiqs as it's called in Nuu-chah-nulth.

Levi Martin (kaamath), Deb Masso (tatuus?aqsa) and Luke MacDonald (tapatcumašuk) from the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations language department reviewed the translations for the signs within Tla-o-qui-aht territory.

“BC Transit reached out to respective nations for language translations, which is very encouraging as we understand one another but have some differences in our dialects,” said Jeneva.

Seth Wright, BC Transit’s senior manager of government relations, said the project “takes meaningful steps towards acknowledging the legacy of colonialism and is a small way we can work to unwind it.”

In June 2023, the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Rob Fleming sent a Mandate Letter to BC Transit with direction to work “towards lasting and meaningful Reconciliation by supporting opportunities for Indigenous Peoples to be full partners in the province we are building together, and delivering on specific commitments as outlined in the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act action plan.”

“Organizationally, we take that commitment seriously,” said Wright, noting that cost wasn’t really a factor.

“It’s not about the dollar figures; it’s about building time in our timeline to build the relationships and have these meaningful conversations and do that work. It’s not work that we have historically done,” he said.

Jeneva praised BC Transit for their efforts.

“BC Transit was incredibly patient, they nudged along but understood that translations are not always a quick turnaround,” she said.

The project was largely enabled with the help of the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District (ACRD), an organization Wright says is further along in the reconciliation journey than a lot of local governments in the province.

“I think the ACRD may be further along due to how closely we work with First Nations in our areas, and the learning we get from exercises such as this,” said Eddie Kunderman, ACRD’s operations manager.

“We have an amazing leadership team that provides decolonization training to our staff and allows us to learn and learn and learn. While we may be further along, we all still have so far to go and I think we learned some valuable lessons even in this process,” said Kunderman, adding that it might have made more sense to get all the parties in the room rather than emailing.

“Laugh, learn, talk, break bread and then work through the translations together. Next time, that is the way we will get items completed together, and truly learn about each other in the process,” he said.

Wright went on to note that the project has garnered a lot of support and enthusiasm from across the organization.

“It’s something that made sense to us. It’s the first time anywhere in the province that we’ve included any language besides English on any of our bus stop signs. We’re really excited,” Wright said.

From the Editor’s Desk

Trauma: How Can We Heal Our Wounded Souls?

You've likely heard of PTSD – post-traumatic stress disorder – but have you heard yet about PCSD? That acronym stands for post-Covid stress disorder, a newly emerging effect of the pandemic.

Increasingly, mental health professionals recognize that the global Covid-19 pandemic has wounded the entire world's emotions. Our souls suffer from that trauma. That seems logical since millions have died from the disease, and billions are at risk, causing severe stress, anxiety, depression, and fear.

Do you feel it? Most people do, and it has led to a wider recognition of the role trauma plays in our lives.

The Impact of Mental Trauma

Many societies around the world have begun to recognize the impact of mental trauma, no matter the cause. Athletes who have recently withdrawn from the Olympics and other events emphasize the importance of their emotional health and well-being by highlighting the stress they feel. This is a healthy sign – their withdrawal from these events sends a signal that emotional health is more important than fame, medals, and trophies and permits more people to recognize their own trauma.

Medical science has made tremendous achievements in curing our physical diseases, but sadly we have little advanced understanding of the causes of mental and emotional ills. However, with greater knowledge of the brain's functioning in the future, we will hopefully have a better chance of receiving the correct remedies for the myriad of mental illnesses and traumas people experience.

Humanity has long dealt with emotional issues at every level in every profession, but the general advice so far has been to “toughen up.” That approach doesn't work, which means failing to recognize and then forcibly moving on through the pain and stress. Of course, to achieve a goal in life, one must expend effort, go through some difficulties and stress, and make sacrifices. The question is, to what extent do the limits of emotional endurance have to be pushed to achieve those goals?

We have made heroes of people who ignored extreme stresses and pains to achieve their goals, but few cared enough to find out later about the emotional and psychological cost of that course of action. What price did those people pay with their bodies and their emotional health?

Medicating Emotional Problems

One of the few currently available alternatives to just ignoring the inner pain of trauma – psychoactive medications – has helped many. So far, in our fairly limited knowledge of how to treat psychological and emotional trauma, the remedies have generally involved pills of different varieties for every disorder. In many instances, individuals consult professionals who prescribe medications along with their counselling sessions. Some of these medications work well, but others have significant side effects and may ultimately create more problems than they solve.

During my own work in the public school system, it surprised me that many of the students who could not cope with the system were given medicine to calm them down. Sadly, many of them behaved like zombies after taking those medications, which left them without sufficient energy or drive to accomplish anything.

The reality: emotional health is very complicated. Many experts are looking for solutions, but we have not yet progressed to the point that we know how to determine the root cause of emotional issues, so, in the meantime, we resort to medicines that may be band-aid solutions. Thankfully there is increased awareness in this field, and more books have been written, and more support groups are created every day. There have been significant improvements in finding new ways of talking about and tackling these issues.

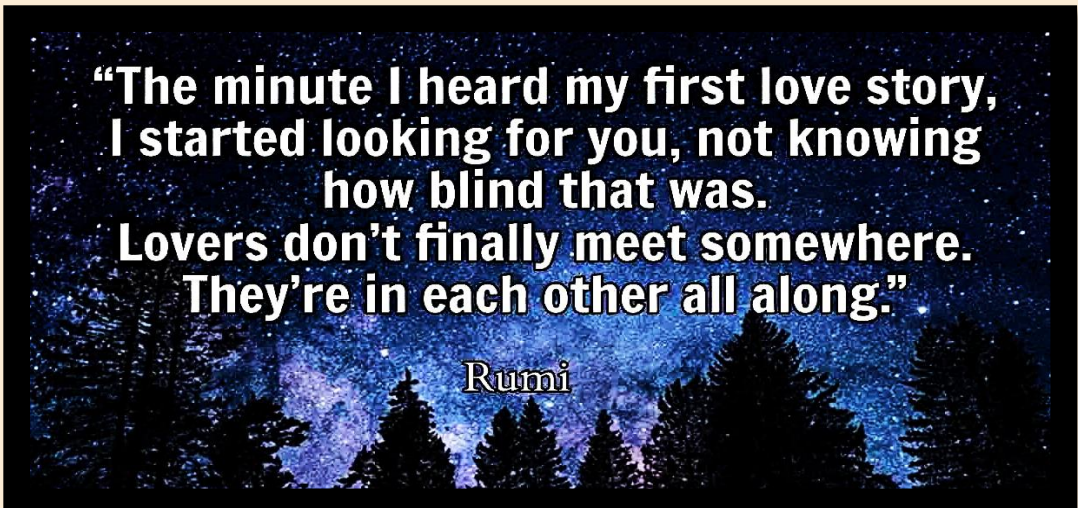
So far, Western medicine has mostly avoided treating these kinds of afflictions with anything but medication. However, we need to further explore the spiritual methods and solutions for these problems, like counselling, consultation, and other kinds of more spiritually-based therapies. If we do not approach these challenges with the right tools, the present solutions may end up as good attempts but failures nevertheless.

There is no doubt that medical sciences have made significant progress. But it is time to face trauma and the emotional issues it produces with a new and different approach – to acknowledge that the root cause of many of these issues is spiritual, and then introduce spiritual methods to deal with them permanently. For example – we now have countless proven and effective methods of relaxation and meditation in every corner of the world based on some ancient philosophies, traditions and religions. New techniques are also being invented every day. Thanks to social media, they are easily accessible in the comforts of our homes.

Prayers are essential for any healing. Almost all religions have healing prayers.

“Thy name is my healing, O my God, and remembrance of Thee is my remedy. Nearness to Thee is my hope, and love for Thee is my companion. Thy mercy to me is my healing and my succor in both this world and the world to come. Thou, verily, art the All-Bountiful, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.” ~Baha’u’llah

Most emotional problems can be remedied temporarily with the help of medicine, but the question remains whether they sufficiently address the origin or the causes of these issues. The future direction of solutions to mental and emotional challenges is essential for humanity’s happiness, well-being, and progress. We have to widen our horizons in search of the most effective answers, and that search deserves wholehearted and earnest striving on everyone’s part.



**“The minute I heard my first love story,
I started looking for you, not knowing
how blind that was.
Lovers don’t finally meet somewhere.
They’re in each other all along.”**

Rumi

Writings to Ponder and Practice

“Beware lest ye harm any soul, or make any heart to sorrow; lest ye wound any man with your words, be he known to you or a stranger, be he friend or foe. Pray ye for all; ask ye that all be blessed, all be forgiven. Beware, beware, lest any of you seek vengeance, even against one who is thirsting for your blood. Beware, beware, lest ye offend the feelings of another, even though he be an evil-doer, and he wish you ill.” ~Abdu’l-Baha

For sharing materials and questions, write to bshams@telus.net